THE REAL JEST

ANOTHER applicant, eh? queried Mr. Hosmer Deering.

He swung around in his swivel chair, and looked at the bit of pasteboard the clerk handed to him.

"The fourth, this morning," he commented. Show her in, Bob."

Bob showed her into the roomy, comfortable office of the firm of Deering & Deering, lawyers. She looked timidly at Mr. Deering. Mr. Deering looked critically at her. She saw a portly old gentleman, with fresh complexion, snow-white hair, black clothes, and exquisitely manicured hands. He saw a fair, girlish face, a youthful form, demurely gowned in smoke-blue cloth, and gloved hands which tightly held the morning paper, in which his advertisement for a stenographer and typewriter had appeared.

"Good morning, Mrs.—ah," consulting the card he held, "Glover. Will you take a seat?"

"I came in answer to your advertisement," she began.

"Yes—yes. Precisely!" It was a pet word of his—precisely. "What experience have you had, Mrs. Glover?"

"I worked three years for the firm of Lowndes & Winthrop. I left them a year ago to be married."

"You have a letter from them, I presume," regarding her with increased attention.

"Yes; they offered me one at the time I left. I hardly know why I kept it, for until a week ago I did not think I should ever present it. I have personal references, also."

She drew several papers from a little leather hand-bag, and passed them over to him. He took them from her and glanced through them. The letter from Lowndes & Winthrop was flatteringly eulogistic. The names she offered of persons who could indorse her personally, were ones well and honorably known.

"These are satisfactory," announced Mr. Deering. "Now, please give me a practical illustration of your skill. Permit me to dictate a letter."

Mrs. Glover took the paper and pencil he extended, removed her gloves, and rapidly filled the page with hieroglyphics. This page she carried over to a convenient typewriter, and a minute or two later brought him back his letter neatly printed. He glanced over it.

"Precisely. Consider yourself engaged, Mrs. Glover. The salary is fifteen dollars a week. You are a widow, I infer?"

Her sensitive face flamed scarlet.

"No," she answered in a low voice, "I am not."

Hosmer Deering was nonplused for an instant. Then, "Divorced?" he ventured.

"No, sir."

She vouchsafed no further information. A brief, embarrassing silence followed.

He rose and opened the door for her.

"Shall we," he asked, "expect you to-morrow?"

"At any time you desire, sir."

"Precisely. To-morrow, then, at half-past eight."

Promptly at half-past eight, on the following morning, Mrs. Glover appeared. Day after day she came, never late; always kind, ready, polite,

"IT WAS NOT A DREAM, DARLING."

capable and retiring. Summer merged in fall, fall in winter, winter melted into spring, and still she came, and was gentle and uncomplaining, under any pressure of work, and in every kind of weather. The members and subordinates of the firm of Deering & Deering fully appreciated her admirable qualities, but none of them knew more of her real life and history when she had been there almost a year than they had known when she came. Indeed, so much confidence had the firm in her discretion that they spoke quite freely in her presence of cases they would have concealed from an ordinary employee. And so it happened that one day, the boy brought into the private room of Deering & Deering the name of a man who waited without.

"Admit him!" commanded Benjamin Deering, who was the extreme physical opposite of his cousin Hosmer, being small, slender, pale, and emaciated.

Mrs. Glover, heard the name of the visitor, and, visibly agitated, arose.

"You will pardon me, Mr. Deering, if I take my work into the next room?"

"No, no!" he replied kindly, but obtusely; "Not at all. You shall be no hindrance to our conversation, I assure you."

He had quite failed to suspect that it was on her own account she wished to retire. She was about to speak again, when the door opened.

Too late! Well, he had met her so seldom he might not recognize her. She turned hurriedly to her work. She bent over it, resolutely keeping her back to the two men.

"Awfully glad to see you, Brandt!" exclaimed Benjamin Deering.

"You look well!" laughed the other, cordially.

The men shook hands heartily, and launched into a conversation so purely personal that it evidenced warm intimacy. Neither paid any attention to the stooped, busy little creature in the corner.

Suddenly a thrill ran through her, and the fingers holding the pencil tightened fiercely. The new comer had spoken a name familiar to her.

"Dudley Parkham — yes. I don't think you knew him. Queer, too, seeing you both were such close friends of mine. A capital fellow, Dudley. One of those keen, quiet, cultured, delightful men who have ideas a little loftier than the rest of us. He did not fall in love with every pretty face he came across, as I always did. He used to say the woman he married should be better, and nobler, and sweeter than all other women. Finally he met her. He married her. It was after that—a year after that, that there came the tragedy."

"The tragedy?"

Well, that may be too intense a word to use. At all events, the delicious domestic life of which he had dreamed, and which was just then being fully realized, was all at once broken up. His wife had left him. He would not sell out his pretty home, built and furnished for the woman he loved. So he put a care-taker in charge of the house. He had some reason to suppose that his wife had gone out to Iowa, where she had relatives. He began a search for her. She had friends in San Francisco and New York. He has searched both cities, but has done it all as quietly as possible, so strongly did he dread notoriety. His search was all in vain."

"Why did his wife leave him?"

"Oh, they had a quarrel—the most absurd and childish thing imaginable. She went to the matinee with a woman of whom he disapproved. She resented his advice in the matter, and declared she would choose her own friends, and that, perhaps, as they could not agree on such a simple matter, they could not agree at all, and had better part. One word led to another and——"

"It ended as you have told me."

"It isn't ended yet, Deering. That is why I'm here, telling you all this rigamarole about my friend. His long endeavor, anxiety, failure, mental distress, have brought on a heavy and probably fatal sickness. He lies at his own home—such a desolate home, Deering!—sick unto death. There is no one to wait on him save that stupid old care-taker. Where can I find the nurse you had when you were so ill a year and a half ago? You said she was efficient. I would like to engage her for poor Dudley."

Benjamin Deering looked troubled.

"I cannot tell you just where to find her. I'm going home in half an hour, however, and I'll have my wife send her word. She will be sure to know. Leave me the address, will you?"

Hardly had the door closed behind Brandt Andrews when Mrs. Glover sprang to her feet, darted across the room, and confronted astonished Mr. Deering, white-faced and tearful-eyed.

"You must get some one to take my place—soon, now! Never mind that other nurse. I must go to tend Dudley Parkham. Please—please, let me go as soon as you can!"

Hosmer Deering had just entered. The cousins regarded her in amazement.

"Oh, you don't understand!" she cried. "I am his wife. I must go to him!"

Hosmer Deering had not heard a word of the story that was told to Benjamin Deering, but her sorrow, her tears, her piteous entreaty were quite enough for him.

"Go, of course, my dear," he said. "We're not rushed with work at present. We'll hold your place two weeks for you. Let us hear from you."

"Oh, how good you are," the sweet, quivering lips managed to say. The next minute she donned her hat and coat, ran down the stairs, not being willing to wait for the elevator, and took a car which would bring her near her forsaken home. Everything therein was exactly as she had left it. Cleanliness and order there were throughout the room, but nowhere warmth, or fragrance, or the indescribable coziness which pervades an ideal home. Its loneliness was unutterably pathetic.

When Dudley Parkman's familiar friend, Brandt Andrews, let himself in with a latch key, an hour later, he paused in the hall, feeling oddly puzzled.

"I smell lilacs," he said. "Who's been bringing lilacs here? And a fire in the grate—cheerful that, to be sure! And that voice like velvet—it never is old Mrs. Collamden's!"

When he went into the sick room a slim little figure rose from beside the bed, and came forward to meet him.

"He is delirious. He does not know me. Of course you remember me, Mr. Andrews?"

"You are Dudley's wife, I believe?"

"Yes."

The following day she sent a note of resignation to the firm of Deering & Deering. But she did not go down town until after the fever had broken up on the twenty-first day.

That night she was sitting beside her husband, as she had sat, taking but brief time for rest, through many weary nights and days. Suddenly he glanced around with an expression of intelligence. She drew back. The invalid fixed his eyes on his friend, who looked eagerly down upon him.

"Do you know, Brandt, I've been having the queerest hallucinations. I thought that Vera was here, waiting on me, nursing me. I," very weakly, "have been so happy that I hardly care to face the wretched reality of my life again."

Andrews signaled the nervous little wife to be silent. Their patient could bear no shock just yet, not even one of joy.

But, a few days later, Vera smiled down on him when he awoke.

"It was not a dream, darling," she whispered. "I have been here all the time."

"Love," he murmured, "can you forgive my tyranny?"

"Hush!" she said, and kissed him. "I was so unreasonable!"

* * * * * * *

When one day Mrs. Parkman, rosy, prettier than ever, stylishly attired, and most childishly happy, ran in to pay her former employers a brief, explanatory visit, the senior member of the firm nodded repeatedly and beamed at her over his glasses.

"We miss you—oh, no doubt of that! But if you and your husband are back in Arcadia—well, well—it is for the best—precisely!"

Partridge and Blacksnake.

While a Pennsylvania farmer was passing through a wood early in the summer, a hen partridge fell fluttering at his feet. Thinking the bird might be blind, he stooped to pick her up, but she could see well enough, for when he was about to grasp her, she flew towards the bushes she had just left. Arrived there she looked back again, and presently ran up to the farmer once more, clucking constantly and with her wings down. As the man walked on a little she flew ahead as if to guide him always returning when she found he was not moving in the desired direction. By little and little she drew him to a tree, near the root of which he saw a nest full of eggs, and a black snake in the act of swallowing one of them. The cause of the partridge's distress was now clear, and the farmer took up a stick and slew the snake. When she perceived the snake was dead she stopped her noise and hid in the bushes. The farmer then went away, but half an hour later came quietly near enough to the tree to see the partridge contentedly sitting on her nest.

Not the Old Racket.

The susceptible young man had asked the girl to be his wife.

"I am very sorry," she said, "very, very sorry; but it can never be. I can be a sis—"

His face grew hard.

"Let up on that, will you, please?" he growled. "It's bad enough for a fellow to be rejected, without having that sister racket fired at him."

"I beg pardon," she smiled coldly, "I had not intended anything of the sort. What I was about to say was that I would be a sister-in-law to you. For further particulars consult your good-looking brother. Good morning."

Diplomatic Reticence.

The social reformer was paying a visit to the convicts in the penitentiary and asking them various questions.

"And what are you doing here my friend?" he said to a good looking man in the shoe shop.

"Making shoes," was the reply that discouraged any further inquisition in that direction.

Both Boys.

Teacher — Now, Willie, suppose you were to hand a playmate your last apple to take a portion of—wouldn't you tell him to take the larger piece? Willie—No, mum! "You wouldn't? Why?" "Cos, 'twouldn't be necessary.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Household.

E Pluribus Unum.

Tho' many and bright are the stars that appear
In that flag, by our country unfurl'd;
And the stripes that are swelling in majesty there
Like a rainbow adorning the world;
There light is unsullied, as those in the sky,
By a deed that our fathers have done:
And they're leagued in as true and as holy a tie,
In their motto of "Many in one."

From the hour when those patriots fearlessly flung
That banner of starlight abroad,
Ever true to themselves, to that motto they clung
As they clung to the promise of God:
By the bayonet traced at the midnight of war.
On the fields where our glory was won,
O perish the heart or the hand that would mar
Our motto of "Many in one."

'Mid the smoke of the contest—the cannon's deep roar
How oft it has gathered renown;
While those stars were reflected in rivers of gore,
When the Cross and the Lion went down;
And tho' few were the lights in the gloom of that hour,
Yet the hearts that were striking below
Had God for their bulwark, and truth for their power,
And they stopped not to number the foe.

From where our green mountain tops blend with the sky,
And the giant St. Lawrence is rolled,
To the waves where the balmy Hesperides lie,
Like the dream of some prophet of old,
They conquer'd and dying, bequeath'd to our care,
Not this boundless dominion alone,
But that banner where loveliness hallows the air,
And their motto of "Many in one."

We are "Many in one" while there glitters a star
In the blue of the heavens above:
And tyrants shall quail 'mid their dungeons afar,
When they gaze on that motto of love.
It shall gleam o'er the sea, 'mid the bolts of the storm—
Over tempest and battle and wreck—
And flame where our guns with their thunder grow warm,
'Neath the blood on the slippery deck.

The oppressed of the earth to that standard shall fly,
Wherever its folds shall be spread;
And the exile shall feel 'tis his own native sky
Where its stars shall float over his head;
And those stars shall increase to the fullness of time
Its millions of cycles has run—
Till the world shall have welcomed its mission sublime,
And the nations of earth shall be one.

Though the old Alleghany may tower to heaven,
And the father of waters divide,
The links of our destiny cannot be riven
While the truth of those words shall abide.
Then, O! let them glow on each helmet and brand,
Tho' our blood like our rivers should run:
Divide as we may in our own native land,
To the rest of the world we are one!

Then up with our flag! Let it stream on the air!
Tho' our fathers are cold in their graves,
They had hands that could strike—they had souls that could dare—
And their sons were not born to be slaves,
Up, up with that banner! Where'er it may call,
Our millions shall rally around;
And a nation of freemen that moment shall fall,
When its stars shall be trail'd on the ground.

—GEORGE W. CUTTER.

IS SCARLET FEVER DYING OUT?—A singular fact has been revealed by the carefully kept death records in England. This is a steady diminution in the number of deaths from scarlet fever, which fell from 14,275 in 1881 to 4,956 in 1891. No adequate explanation has been offered. As contributing causes, however, Dr. William Ogle finds (1) that the proportion of children to the population materially declined in the decade; (2) that the isolation of the sick and other sanitary practices became more general; and (3) that in some unknown way scarlet fever has been gradually assuming a milder form. The last conclusion is justified by ample evidence. The part played by sanitation has doubtless been of some importance, as may be inferred from the fact that typhoid fever deaths have also been diminishing. Dr. Ogle, feels assured that epidemics of scarlet fever will not soon, if ever, again be the scourge to infant life they have been.—Ex.

THIRSTY BABIES.—It seems strange, but true it is, that there are yet in existence young mothers who never give their young babies a drink of water. Water is as necessary to a child's well-being as good food and its bath. Two or three times a day the baby should be given a drink of water, say a tablespoonful, at regular intervals. Try the little mite and see how he relishes it. Furthermore, it will, if given at regular intervals, keep the bowels in good order. The other day, by the way, a prominent physician was called in for a severe case of vomiting and sore throat. He prescribed a tablespoonful of water and one of milk to be taken separately every hour. His patient laughed, but had the good sense to obey, and sure enough, in a few hours she was well enough to get up and attend to her work.

CARE OF WET SHOES.—There are few things more disagreeable than to put on a pair of stiff, brittle shoes that have been thrown aside to dry after a rainy day. Here is a formula that claims to eradicate the trouble: First wipe off gently with a soft cloth all surface wet and mud; then, while still wet, rub well with paraffine oil, using flannel for the purpose. Set them aside till partially dry, when a second treatment with oil is advisable. They may then be deposited in a conveniently warm place, where they will dry gradually and thoroughly. Before applying French kid dressing give them a final rubbing with the flannel still slightly dampened with paraffine and the boots will be soft and flexible as new kid and but very little affected by their bath in the rain.

HOW TO COOK AN OLD HEN.—When so eminent a scientist as Prof. W. Mattieu Williams thought it worth his while to experiment with this somewhat tough subject of gastronomic contemplation, it may not be amiss to profit by the result of his experiment. He took a hen six years old but otherwise in good condition and cooked it slowly in water for four hours, then let it stand in the water until the next day, when it was roasted for about an hour, basting frequently with some of the broth in which it was simmered. It was then pronounced as tender and fine flavored as a young chicken roasted in the ordinary way, notwithstanding the good broth obtained by stewing.—Ex.

GRILLED MUSHROOMS.—Prepared in this way the mushrooms must be large. After washing and peeling, score the tops with a knife and lay them for one hour in a pickle of oil, salt, pepper and lemon juice. Place them tops down on a close barred gridiron and broil over a clear, slow fire. Serve on toast with a sauce made as follows: Chop the stalks and pieces of mushrooms that have broken in the washing and stew in broth for ten minutes with a little minced parsley and onion. Beat the yelk of one egg with a gill of cream and add slowly to the sauce. Stir the whole until hot without boiling and pour it over the toast.

STRING BEANS.—String, snap and wash two quarts beans, boil in plenty of water about fifteen minutes, drain off and put on again in about two quarts boiling water; boil an hour and a half, and add salt and pepper just before taking up, stirring in one and a half tablespoonfuls of butter rubbed into two tablespoonfuls of flour and half a pint of sweet cream. Or boil a piece of salted pork one hour, then add beans and boil an hour and a half. For shelled beans boil half hour in water enough to cover and dress as above.

BAKED MUSHROOMS.—Toast for each person a large slice of bread and spread over with rich sweet cream; lay on each slice, head downward, a mushroom, or if small, more than one season and fill each with as mu cream as it will hold. Place over a custard cup, pressing well down the toast; set in a moderate oven cook fifteen minutes. Do not rem the cups for five minutes after t come from the oven, as thereby ta flavor of the mushroom is preserved in its entirety.

CAULIFLOWER.—Tie up the cauliflower in a coarse tarletan and boil in hot water to which a little salt has been added. Drain and lay in a deep dish with flower uppermost. Heat a teacupful of milk thickened with two tablespoonfuls of butter cut in pieces and rolled in flour; add pepper, salt and the beaten white of an egg, boil up for a few seconds, stirring briskly. Take from the fire; flavor with lemon and pour over the cauliflower, reserving about half the sauce for use at the table.

PARSNIP FRITTERS—Boil the parsnips, and, when tender, take off the skin and mash them fine; add a tablespoonful of flour and a beaten egg; make into small cakes with a spoon and put into boiling hot lard or beef drippings in a hot frying pan. When fried a delicate brown put on a dish with a little of the fat in which they were fried over them and serve hot.

SCALLOPED CAULIFLOWER.—Boil in net, then clip into clusters and s stems downward, in a buttered dish. Beat a cup of bread cr a soft paste with two tabl of melted butter and fo Season and whip in a r ter, pepper and salt th and pour the mixture o minutes, covered, in a brown.

HER REAL RI

Mamie—I believe in
Gertie—Then you t man should have a vot
Mamie—No; but I t man should have a v Bazar.

SAFE IN HER PO

Burglar—Where do yo money? Biggsby—Er—i pocket of my wife's dress. pal)—Come on, Pete; we r ley explorin' expedition Press.

SEE that your bre vigorous and of goo

THE hen that lays moving around and s time.